

Clean Water Fund Program Application Process and Contents for Wastewater Projects



Notice of Intent to Apply

The first step in the application process for obtaining Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) financial assistance is to submit a [notice of intent to apply \(ITA\)](#), due Oct. 31 in the year prior to the state fiscal year (SFY). DNR staff will review the ITA, and if it is an eligible project, it will be posted on the corresponding SFY [CWFP project priority list \(PPL\)](#). To be eligible to submit an application, the project must appear on the corresponding SFY PPL.

Deadline

Submit the CWFP financial assistance application **with all required documentation** through the [online application system](#):

- If competing for [principal forgiveness \(PF\)](#), applicants must submit the complete CWFP application by **Sept. 30**.
- If not competing for PF during SFY 2027, it is recommended that applicants submit an application by the Sept. 30, 2026, deadline due to potential limitations with [loan capacity](#).

Important: Incomplete applications will be ineligible for loan funding, unless supplemental funds are available, and the application is made complete. Applications made complete after the Sept. 30 submittal deadline will be ineligible for PF funding.

Facility Plan and Plans and Specifications

Facilities Plans

An **approved** facilities plan is a requirement of the application. Any project seeking CWFP funds must be submitted to DNR for plan review and approval, regardless of a “reviewable” or “maintenance” project classification. For example, an abbreviated form of a facilities plan, or engineering report, is required even for sanitary sewer replacement or rehabilitation projects, if seeking CWFP funding. The facility plan covers certain federal requirements such as the cost-effectiveness analysis and the environmental analysis.

Requirements for submitting a facilities plan are explained on the [Municipal Wastewater Facility Planning webpage](#).

- Submit required copies of the facilities plan to the DNR Bureau of Water Quality for approval. **Provide enough lead time** (preferably six months) before the Sept. 30 application deadline for the DNR to complete the facilities plan review.
- Include a [parallel cost estimate](#) and an [environmental assessment](#). See also [Septage Considerations Guidance](#).

Plans and Specifications Submittal

Follow requirements as explained in DNR's [Wastewater Plan Submittals by Project Type](#).

- Submit approvable plans and specifications to the DNR by the application submittal deadline. Applicants must submit final construction plans and specifications to the Bureau of Water Quality (postmarked by the application deadline) **and** upload electronic copies of the plans and specifications with the application.

Contact the [DNR plan review staff](#) if you have questions about these requirements.

Application Contents

- Project budget
- [Equipment Replacement Fund \(ERF\) schedule](#)
- Certification that the [User Charge System and Sewer Use Ordinance](#) meet the requirements of s. [NR 162.07](#), Wis. Adm. Code.
- A four-year projection of utility revenues and expenses

Required Documents

- Facility Plan Approval Letter**
- Approvable Plans and Specifications** for all parts of the project for which the municipality is requesting financial assistance.
- Financial Information:** Municipal financial information required by the Department of Administration as indicated below. This information is necessary in determining the affordability of the project and the financial capability of the municipality to repay the loan.
 - Municipality's current wastewater utility budget, if applicable.
 - Municipality's most recent three years of financial statements, or internal financial statements, if no audit was done.
 - Principal and interest payment schedule for each outstanding bond issue.
 - Latest official statements, authorizing resolutions, or loan agreements for all outstanding debt obligations.

- [Interim Debt](#) – Submit the debt instrument to be refinanced with CWFP funds, if applicable.
- **Reimbursement Resolution:** A [reimbursement resolution](#) declaring intent to reimburse municipal accounts with financial assistance proceeds. It is **required** that an adopted reimbursement resolution be submitted with the CWFP application. However, if construction will begin prior to submitting a CWFP application, the municipality should pass a reimbursement resolution prior to starting construction. Construction includes land acquisition. Contact your bond counsel with questions on the reimbursement resolution.
- **User Charge System and Sewer Use Ordinance:** Proposed or existing. Any required rate increases must be adopted prior to the CWFP loan closing.
- **Contracts with System Users:** Any existing or proposed contracts with system users (i.e., industrial users).
- **Intermunicipal Agreement:** A proposed or executed [intermunicipal agreement](#) if the project serves more than one municipality. An intermunicipal agreement is not required for metropolitan sewerage districts in which all municipalities being served have been annexed into the sewerage district.
- **Cost and Effectiveness Certification:** All applicants must certify that they have studied and evaluated the [cost and effectiveness](#) of the processes, materials, techniques and technologies for carrying out the proposed project. Applicants must certify that they have selected, to the maximum extent practicable, a project that maximizes the potential for efficient water use, reuse, recapture, conservation and energy conservation. The cost of construction, operations and maintenance and replacement must be taken into account.
- **Green Project Reserve (GPR):** Indicate if the project includes any [“green” elements](#) as described on [Form 8700-357](#).
- **Engineering and Professional Services Contracts:** Executed engineering contracts for planning and design, and non-engineering professional services contracts (if applicable) are required, if funds are requested for planning and design in the application budget. Copies of any existing executed amendments associated with costs requested in the budget must also be uploaded. If available at the time of application submittal, an executed construction management contract and any associated executed amendments must also be uploaded.

Other Documents

- **Phosphorus Reduction Related Costs Documentation:** A breakout of major components related to phosphorus reduction, if requesting phosphorus reduction [priority principal forgiveness \(Priority PF\)](#).
- **Emerging Contaminants Related Costs Documentation and PFAS Concentration Documentation,** if requesting emerging contaminants PF.

Requested Documents

- **Design Life Calculation Worksheet:** Required for all projects, except those that consist **solely** of installation or replacement of pipeline and associated appurtenances. The [Design Life Calculation Worksheet](#) is required for pipe re-lining and/or rehabilitation projects. Both a signed PDF version and an Excel version of the worksheet must be submitted at least nine weeks prior to loan closing.

Application Completeness Review

An assigned DNR project manager will review your submitted application for completeness. If the application is complete, the DNR project manager will email the municipality (and consulting engineer if applicable) indicating that the application is complete; and the project will be included on the corresponding SFY [CWFP funding list](#), typically posted by early December. The DNR project manager will then work with the municipality and consulting engineer on closing the loan.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the application process, contact:

- Lisa Bushby, Clean Water Fund Program coordinator, at Lisa.Bushby@wisconsin.gov
- Sarah Bolitho, storm water projects specialist, at Sarah.Bolitho@wisconsin.gov
- Ryan Atkinson, Emerging Contaminants Program specialist, at Ryan.Atkinson@wisconsin.gov

For more information on the Clean Water Fund Program, visit our website at dnr.wi.gov/aid/eif.html.

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